231 [262] for herding or driving cattle and the natives seemed much surprised at the idea. They[1] are not eaten and the idea is considered disgusting, although there is no definite taboo on it. There seemed to be no dogs in many villages and their economic importance is slight.

Cattle are all of the humped or zebu variety, with moderately long sideward curving horns. The size of the hump varies with the animal's age and condition and is hardly noticeable in many cases. There is a great variety of colors and markings, each known by a special name, but black and white seem to predominate. There are said to be a few wild cattle, descendants of escapes, which are very shy and live in the heavy forest.

293 The cattle belonging to each village are herded together by boys, with, in the old days, a few armed men for protection. During the day they are allowed to graze anywhere on land that is lying fallow. At night they are driven into pens, which are now on the outskirts of the villages. In the old days the pens were often in the village and the cattle were driven within the stockade if an attack threatened.

417 The Menabe cattle pens are like large, roughly built houses with thatched roofs and open sides. Among the Ikongo, who live in less rainy territory, the pens are usually open. They are made from posts planted about 2 feet apart and laced together with withes or vines. Two posts, planted one behind the other, stand on each side of the entrance, which is closed by dropping long saplings in between them. Semi-subterranean pens of the plateau type are unknown among the Tanala. The pens are never cleaned and in some I saw the manure had accumulated to a depth of over 3 feet.

422 6/6 233 The Ikongo have a regular system of ownership marks, made by cutting one or both ears in various patterns. These marks are hereditary in lineages and there are sometimes stories to account for their origin. Families within the lineage usually have no individual marks. The Menabe rarely earmark their cattle, their herds being so small that ownership is never in question.

232 There is no attempt at systematic cattle breeding and it does not seem to have occurred to the natives that their herds could be improved in this way. One informant expressed surprise when I told him of our methods, then said that after all the matter took care of itself, for the best bull would defeat the others and take all the cows.

●825 Young bulls are often castrated, but solely with the idea of improving the flesh. A Menabe informant said that two bulls in a herd must always be castrated at the same time, so that they could

[1] [i.e., dogs – Analyst]

1: Linton E-8 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

give each other sympathy in their affliction. If one was castrated alone, he would die of grief. The Betsileo have a similar belief, but I could not learn whether it was universal among the Tanala. 825

Most of the Tanala territory is poorly suited to cattle culture because of the heavy forest and constant rain. It is only along the western margin of their lands, where they border on the plateau, that one finds real grazing country. The Tanala herds are usually small and, although cattle have great social significance, they contribute little to the physical well-being of the people. They are only killed in connection with ceremonies, and the average Tanala does not taste beef once a month. Indeed, cattle killings are so rare that to dream of cutting or eating beef is a bad omen, presaging a funeral in the family. Hides are so little used that, until European traders provided a market for them, it was customary to cut up the animals without flaying them and cook meat and skin together. 233 311 [262] [787] [439]

The Menabe consider milk a luxury, and it is almost impossible to purchase it in their territory. It is a by-product, taken only when the cow seems to have more than enough to feed her calf. Milking, like everything else connected with cattle, is done exclusively by men. The explanation given for this is that it is a dangerous occupation. Actually, it is a laborious process, requiring three persons. One man holds the calf where the cow can see and lick it, another milks, usually squatting on the right side, and a third holds the cow's tail over her back and gently rubs her vagina with his fingers. The milk is boiled at once, while still warm. It is considered disgusting to drink it fresh. After boiling, it is either drunk or cooked with rice. 234 462 [252]

The Ikongo make more use of milk and are somewhat more expert at milking, although they use the same method. They rarely boil their milk. A little is drunk fresh, but most of it is deliberately soured. A little sour milk is always left in the milking gourd so that the new milk turns almost at once. The curds are eaten with a spoon and the whey drunk. None of the Tanala know how to make butter or cheese. 234 252 [204]

Apparently cow's milk was rarely if ever used to supplement or replace mother's milk in feeding nursing infants. The idea has recently been borrowed from Europeans, but it is still considered rather unnatural and is used only as a last resort. 853 177

The wheel and plow were unknown in Madagascar prior to European contact. The Tanala never use their cattle for draught or transport and this holds for the rest of the island, with one or two exceptions. The Imerina and Betsileo now use ox carts and 177 492

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

At the present time the Menabe believe that the souls of their kings pass into *fanana*, large snakes apparently of the boa family, but the belief has arisen in the last hundred years, in imitation of the Betsileo. The story told of its origin, if true, affords an interesting example of how such ideas may spread. Shortly after the death of King Rainievola a *fanana* came into the royal house at Ambohimanga and although it was put out several times it always returned. It was plainly a portent of some sort and the family called an *ombiasy* ("medicine-man") to see what it meant. He could get no answer from the *sikidy* ("divination") but said he thought the snake must want to tell them something. They called a second *ombiasy* with the same result. Then a man of the Betsileo tribe who was living at Ambohimanga said: "If that happened in our country we should know that it was the soul of a king returning. Perhaps it is so here, since you now have kings." At that time kingship was newly established among the Menabe under the overlordship of the Imerina. The people went through the Betsileo ritual, under his direction, and at the name of Rainievola the animal crawled upon the *lamba* spread out for it. After that the Tanala accepted the *fanana* belief and ceremony. Another visit of the same sort occurred just before the idols were burned at the order of the Imerina queen.

In ordinary practice the term *ambiroa* is applied only to the souls or doubles of the living. The *ambiroa* of the dead are called *angatra*, the difference between the two terms being very nearly the same as our own distinction between "soul" and "ghost." *Angatra* is also used as a general term for spirits, including minor Beings not of human origin as well as ghosts.

Angatra of human origin are divided into two classes, the *fahasiny* and the *nisa*. The *fahasiny* are the *ambiroa* of deceased members of the gens. The term means literally "ninth," in reference to the ninth place in the arrangement of the *sikidy*, which is the place which represents the ancestors. The *fahasiny* supposedly are ever present and take an active interest in the affairs of their descendants, helping and punishing them. They are constantly invoked and sacrificed to and their worship is the core of the native religion. They may be invoked anywhere, but are thought to hear best and be most accessible at the village sacred place, where the memorial stones are erected. They appear to the living as ghosts, or in dreams.

The *nisa* are the *ambiroa* of remote ancestors whose names and personalities have been forgotten, or of people who occupied a territory before the ancestors of the present inhabitants arrived. They

1: Linton E-6 (1926-27) 1953 FYS Tanala FYS

777 wooden boxes with or without covers. Small rectangular boxes are also used and there are a few fantastic shapes, like the coffin model shown in Fig. 23, f. This is a charm for success in wrestling and the shape of the box may be significant. Some of the larger charms for general good fortune, which are kept in the dwelling, are put up in finely woven covered baskets. Horn containers, which are very common among the southern and western tribes, are rarely used [531] here (Fig. 23, e). Such containers may be decorated with a band of bead work around the larger end, but this is purely for ornament.

777 Few formulae for charms were obtained. They have to be bought
824 individually, often at exorbitant prices, and there is no way of checking on their authenticity. One *ody hasy* (charm to protect against gunshot wounds) is made by placing together pieces of wood from the following trees or bushes: (1) *Tsikobeza*, tree, virtues not defined. (2) *Vahila*, a vigorously growing bush. This gives strength and vitality. (3) *Asiro*, a species of palm with hard wood. Gives the person a hard surface. (4) *Berano* (lit. "much water"), a plant. This turns the enemy's bullets to water as they leave the gun. (5) *Tsiloitra* (lit. "impenetrable"), a tree. This makes invulnerable. (6) *Vahimasasy* (lit. "brave creeper"), a vine. This makes brave. (7) *Kelimisasy* (lit. "little brave"), a small tree. This makes brave. (8) *Famakilefona*, a tree. This protects from spears. (9) *Famakibady* (lit. "gun breaker"), a tree. This will cause the enemies' guns to explode. The substances are gathered and combined without any spell or ceremony and put in a container of wood or horn. They are usually soaked with grease or honey, but this is not necessary.

754 A charm used for killing an enemy is more complicated. Take
777 a root from the west side of the *arongana* ("poinsettia") plant and one
[824] from the east side of the *hazolinga* (a plant). Take the end of an aerial root of the *tsirihomby* (a large tree, apparently of the fig family) just before it touches the ground, also a root of the *longona* (a large-leafed plant like a caladium, growing in water) before it [825] touches the water. Add to these a small insect called *sakodiasatra* which lives in rotten wood. Pound the materials together in a mortar and fill the shell of a fresh-water snail with the mixture. The person who wishes to use this charm takes it and seven grains of rice, which have been husked by hand, and goes to a new tomb, usually at night. He makes a hole in the earth at the head of the tomb and names the person to be killed. He then waits until he hears any animal cry. After this he places the charm and the seven

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

powder on the middle of his forehead, on either cheek and on his tongue. In general, the only charms which will be discarded are evil ones which have accomplished their object. 777 784

Charms for the family or lineage are much less numerous than those for the individual. Nearly all such groups seem to have *ody andro* (charms to bring general good fortune), which are kept in the dwelling of the family head. There are also charms against hail and locusts. Apparently one family or individual in each village will have such a charm which is used for the benefit of the whole group. The locust charm, *ody valala*, consists of a small basket containing scrapings from the roots and shoots of a plant called *ramanjarana*. The name means "to make clouds," because a little vapor flies up when the plant is cut. When a locust swarm is sighted, the charm is brought out and hung on a pole on the side of the *kianza* ("village square") from which the locusts are coming. A fire is made under it with the leaves of the same plant, producing dense clouds of smoke. The charm against hail was not learned. Among the pagan Imerina, every village had its hail and locust charms, each with its guardian, who received a small subsidy from the inhabitants. 621 777 825 [824]

Every Tanala village has a charm and many have two. The main charm is called the *tepanony*. Some famous *ombiasy* is called in to make it at the time the village is founded. He determines the proper materials by divination, pounds them together, adds a piece of silver money, and then buries the whole in the center of the *kianza* ("village square"). Over the charm are planted roots of four plants, the *sonjo* ("taro"), *sody fafana*, *ahibita*, and *arivotombelona*. The spot is usually enclosed by a little rectangle of stone slabs set on edge. In some villages the plants are watered and tended, in others they have been allowed to die. If the village moves as a whole, the *tepanony* is usually dug up and reinterred at the new site. The *tepanony* protects the village from pestilence, also from lightning and malevolent ghosts, if the divination has shown that there will be danger from these at the site chosen. It does not protect from enemy attack. 621 777 787

The second village charm is known as the *kosary* and has the special function of protecting from enemies. Apparently most villages had a *kosary* in ancient times, but with the establishment of peace they have become unnecessary and have mostly disappeared. The *kosary* was placed in a small fenced enclosure just outside the principal gate. Apparently the form was rather variable. In a few cases it seems to have been a wooden image, set with its face toward

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FYS Tanala FYS

621 the path. That at Ambohimanga, the former capital of the Tanala
787 Menabe, was made from various leaves buried in the earth. Over
777 this a large-leaved plant, also called the *kovasy*, was planted. Each year the top of the plant was cut off and the bark scraped from the stump for 2 or 3 inches below. The right ear of an ox was cut and blood from it rubbed on the stump. Leaves were plucked from the plant, pounded, and mixed with water which was given to the ox to drink. The ox was the property of the village *ombiasy* and the same one was used each year. After this inoculation the ox was turned loose in the forest. The ox was restless, wandering constantly, and whenever he crossed the trail of an enemy coming to attack the village he would begin bellowing and would come at once to the *kovasy* and stand there bellowing. The direction from which he came showed that from which the enemy was coming and the villagers would have time to prepare for the attack.

777 In addition to the types of charms just outlined there were
342 charms to bless houses and bring fortune to their inhabitants. These were buried on the site before the house was built.

825 The crocodiles in the Manandriana River were rendered innocuous
777 by a charm thrown into the river long ago. The *fady* for this charm was that in crossing the river one must paddle with a spade or axe instead of a regular paddle and that one must not wash a *lamba mena* ("shroud") in it. So long as these rules were observed the crocodiles did no damage, but they have been ignored since the coming of the French, with the result that crocodiles now carry off domestic animals, although they still do not attack people.

The native name for charms in general is *tamongo*, *mohara* or *ody*, the terms being used interchangeably.

HEALING

755 One of the principal duties of the *ombiasy* is healing. When a person becomes ill he goes to the *ombiasy*, or sends for him, and pays an advance fee of 1.20 to 1.50 francs, arranging at the same time for a larger fee to be paid after the cure. The *ombiasy* makes the *sikidy* to learn the cause of the illness and prescribes from his knowledge, or, if the case is not clear, makes the *sikidy* a second time to find the remedy. The remedy is usually a mixture of herbs, compounded as a charm. Part of the charm is put in water. The sick person drinks some of this and bathes his whole body with the rest. Another part of the medicine is done up in a little cloth bag and worn around the patient's neck. There is always a *fady* which the patient

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FYS Tanala FYS

The breaking of a village *fady* entails injury to the whole village 784
and may be punished by a fine or by rough handling on the part of 621
the villagers. However, there seems to be no attempt at purification. The breaking of a gens *fady* affects only the person who has broken it. If forbidden food has been eaten, the offender puts a silver bracelet in water and then gargles with the water, saying: "I have eaten something forbidden, and for this reason I gargle with silver water. I wash myself now that I may be purified and that the offense may not cause me illness or accident." The purification is performed in private and neither gods nor ancestors are invoked.

Fady are imposed by *ombiasy* or by an ancestor upon his descendants. Apparently there is no method by which they can be revoked. The only thing which corresponds to the temporary and revokable taboos which are such an important feature of Polynesian culture is the prohibition which a person may put upon entering his house. If a man wishes to be undisturbed, he will set up a ring of grass or vine in a cleft stick outside the door. The observance of such a prohibition is simply a matter of good manners and the custom seems to have no religious implications.

OMENS

The Tanala pay relatively little attention to signs or omens. 787
Those which are recognized are known to everyone. A man may sometimes consult an *ombiasy* to learn the meaning of some peculiar and unnatural happening which he feels must be significant, but I could not learn that *ombiasy* themselves ever consult omens before coming to a decision. They believe the *sikidy* to be so effective that all other forms of divination are unnecessary.

The commonest and most generally recognized omens are as 787
follows: If one sees an *antsangoa* (a species of large walking stick 825
insect) it is a sign of approaching death in his family or village. This is because the legs of the animal stretch out in front and behind like the poles of a bier. The size of the animal indicates the importance of the person who will die and its color that of the shroud in which the body will be wrapped.

If a snake called *fanatiorariha* (a small species about 2 to 2½ feet long and 1 inch in diameter) crosses one's path or enters the house, a member of the family will die.

If a person going on a journey sees a crocodile lying in the sun, it is a sure sign that he will die on the journey.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

787 If a hen lays a very small egg, or eats its eggs, or crows, it is a
825 sign of danger, sickness or death in the family.

After the *kovavy* ("guard an charm") was set up at Ambohimanga, if a single crow flew over the village it was a sign that enemy scouts were near. If there were two or more crows, the enemy was at a distance and would not arrive. If a wild boar or lemur came to the village of its own accord, it was a sign of great and imminent danger. This only happened once, in the time of Queen Iovana, and an ox was sacrificed to the ancestors at once to avert the evil.

DREAMS

787 The significance attached to dreams of ancestors has already been discussed. Other dreams were interpreted as actual experiences of the *ambiroa* and were not considered ominous. I could learn of no instances of dream interpretation.

INSANITY AND SPIRIT POSSESSION

828 There is a very sharp distinction in the native mind between
158 spirit possession and insanity. The latter is believed to be due to the absence of the normal personality, equated with the soul. Although the insane are usually well treated, they receive no special respect and are not thought to be under spirit protection. Formerly those who were violent or otherwise troublesome, or who appeared to be suffering, were put to death as painlessly as possible. This was considered a merciful act. At the present time even the more conservative tribes usually send their insane to be cared for by the government.

787 All the Malagasy believe in spirit possession, but its importance
158 in the culture pattern varies considerably with the tribe. The idea appears to be most developed among the Sakalava, on the west coast, moderately strong among the plateau tribes, and weak among those of the southeast coast. The Antaifasina, who belong to the last-named group, insisted that they were unfamiliar with it prior to about 1910, when it was introduced by tribesmen who had worked on west coast plantations. Some of these men became possessed by Sakalava spirits, who returned with them. Even now, many of the Antaifasina claim to be possessed by the souls of Sakalava chiefs and speak Sakalava during their seizures. In view of the unquestionable antiquity of spirit possession among the other east coast tribes, it seems probable that the idea was already present, but received a great impetus from the Sakalava contact. It could not have been

538 10. *Tandraka azon-drahalahy tsy hanin'aty.* "One does not eat the liver of a *tandraka* [hedgehog] which his brother has caught."

11. *Vadin-drahalahy tsy manara-mitavy.* "Your brother's wife does not follow you to the *tavy* [rice field]."

12. *Sindrany manana ny andro hoatry ny manan'ny hasoa.* "It is better to have a good destiny than to be handsome."

13. *Ny fanahy sambori-dava; tsy mamelik'olo tsy ny tompony.* "The spirits are like your loin-cloth; good or bad it still encircles you."

[325] 14. *Vorom-potsy tsy milavitr'aomby.* "White herons do not go far from the cattle." White herons are always to be seen about a cattle herd, catching the insects they frighten up from the grass.

15. *Ny fanahy ratsy hidin'ny hoavy, ary ny fanahy soa vava lozoky ny hamany.* "The wicked shut their doors to those who would enter, but an honest man's door is open to all the world," i.e., he has nothing to conceal.

16. *Veloma tsy mandara hoandry, ary sakafo tsy mandara vatsy.* "Saying 'Farewell' does not prevent one from sleeping in the village, nor does carrying food prevent one from taking a meal with a relative."

17. *Sindrany miarakandro aomby vato hoatra ny miambin'olo folo.* "Better to guard a hundred cattle than to watch ten men."

[278] 18. *Sakaviro natao ody vaza sady fanafody hanitragnitra.* "Like ginger used as a medicine for the teeth. It both does good and tastes good."

19. *Ny ahiahy tsy ihavana.* "With suspicion there is no friendship."

20. *Tatanam-by rabdrian-ty ty koa manatsara ty.* "The hammer and anvil; two friends who help each other."

21. *Havanan'dambo tsy ritra amboa raiky.* "One dog cannot put many wild boar to flight."

22. *Hazo tokana tsy mba ala.* "One tree does not make a forest."

23. *Tondro tokana tsy mahafoy hao.* "One finger cannot catch a louse."

24. *Kiboty miray miarakandro: ny maty iraisahoma, ny velo iraisa miarakandro.* "Be like orphans guarding cattle. If one dies they eat it in common and they all watch the survivors."

25. *Mpivady tsy mifamara ady no farany.* "Husband and wife are never through scolding each other."